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Chebucto Community Council
June 9, 2008

TO: Chair and Members of Chebucto Community Council

SUBMITTED BY:



Mike Labrecque, P.Eng., Director of Transportation and Public Works

DATE: May 9, 2008

SUBJECT: NonTruck Routes - Mumford Road

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Item 10.1 that was raised at the May 7, 2007, meeting of Chebucto Community Council.

BACKGROUND

At the May 7, 2007, meeting of Chebucto Community Council it was MOVED by Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Adams that Chebucto Community Council request that staff proceed with the necessary steps to amend the Truck Route By-law to prohibit trucks from crossing the bridge over the railway tracks on Mumford Road.

There has been a truck route by-law in the former City of Halifax and now in HRM since the 1970s. Mumford Road has never been a truck route even though there are two shopping malls located on it. Some residents have complained that large trucks coming from Highway 102 travel to the malls using Joseph Howe Drive and Mumford Road instead of using either Bayers Road - Connaught Avenue - Chebucto Road or Joseph Howe - Armdale Roundabout - Chebucto Road.

DISCUSSION

Section 194 of the Nova Scotia Motor Vehicle Act allows a municipality to control operation of trucks by resolution or by by-law. The advantage of using a by-law is that signs are not required at every street intersection that might be of interest in enforcement. This is the strategy followed by HRM - a by-law was passed that included a list of roadway sections. Enforcement does not require any signs.

HRM does post some signs, at major intersections, particularly at signalized intersections, directing truck drivers where they may or may not travel and at what times of day, in the interests of making enforcement penalties more firm. Under the by-law, a violation is punishable by a fine only, but if a truck driver violates one of the signs, then he or she can be ticketed for failure to obey a traffic control device under the Motor Vehicle Act and if convicted will get two demerit points on his or her driver's licence.

For a police officer trying to enforce the Truck Route By-Law against a driver on Mumford Road the officer has to observe the trucker leave the proper truck route and proceed to a destination closer to another truck route. This process takes time and some trucks are correctly using the route concerned.

The idea of prohibiting through trucks on Mumford Road was to make enforcement easier. If, say, no trucks over a certain size were permitted to cross the railway bridge then enforcement would be simple. A police officer could be positioned at one end of the bridge and catch any over-size truck crossing and issue a ticket. The necessary signs could be posted at each end of the bridge itself. Exemptions could be made for HRM service vehicles, fire trucks, garbage and recycling trucks, and any other reasonable needs.

The language of the Motor Vehicle Act applicable to the idea reads: "Local authorities may by by-law limit the operation of trucks or other commercial vehicles, by class, weight or otherwise, to certain designated highways at all times or between specified hours and may prohibit or regulate the operation of these trucks or other commercial vehicles upon any highway and at any time not so designated except for purposes specified in the by-law." Notice the Act allows a total prohibition.

The trouble with this concept is that a truck driver arriving at either end of the bridge over the railway tracks has a problem; there is no way for the truck to be turned around. On the west side of the bridge, a driver, if he/she has sufficient notice, could turn left onto Ralston Avenue and work his/her way out through that residential neighbourhood but that is not a good solution on those residential streets. On the east side of the bridge the driver, if he/she has sufficient notice could turn left into the shopping centre - but that is private property - or right onto Romans - but again that is a more-residential area. Therefore, proper notice signs are mandatory on the approaching nearby truck routes - Joseph Howe Avenue and Chebucto Road. The legend on the signs must be relatively lengthy:

*TRUCKS OVER 3 TONNES NOT PERMITTED ON BRIDGE OVER RAILWAY ON
MUMFORD ROAD - EXCEPT AUTHORIZED VEHICLES*

These signs (four required) would need to be 1.2 metres wide by 1.5 metres high (4 feet by 5 feet). They would need two 150 mm (6 inch) posts for each sign and would be mounted spanning over the sidewalk on each approach to Mumford Road.

On Joseph Howe Drive there is sufficient space for these signs to be mounted, and also on the westbound (outbound) direction of Chebucto Road, but there is not enough property for such a large sign to be mounted anywhere near Mumford Road on the eastbound (inbound) leg of Chebucto Road approaching Mumford Road, either with today's configuration, or after the reversing lane concept is installed. Also, with the proposed concept the sidewalk is even closer to the existing residential buildings and such a large sign would also have a significant visual effect on properties near where the sign was placed.

Therefore, while the concept of prohibiting large truck operation over the railway track bridge has attractions it is not practical to implement in a proper way. Enforcement of the existing truck route provisions should continue nonetheless.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

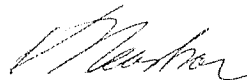
There are no budget implications.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/cc.html> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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